AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.-35. (Canceled).

36. (Currently Amended) Fluid processing apparatus for use in an elongate passage, the apparatus comprising a plurality of operating devices for applying ultrasonic energy to fluid within the passage,

wherein said operating devices are provided at different axial positions along the elongate passage and wherein all axially adjacent operating devices are radially non-parallel and radially non-opposing.

37. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein axially adjacent operating devices are relatively radially displaced relative to each other by an angle between 0° and 90°

38. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 37, wherein the angle is from 30° to 60°.

39. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 38, wherein the angle is substantially 45°.

40. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, which comprises five or more operating devices contained within the same elongate passage.

41. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein alternate operating devices are radially aligned.

42. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, which comprises five operating devices, in which the operating devices are radially symmetrically disposed either side of a line parallel with the longitudinal axis of the elongate passage.

43. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 42, wherein the first, third and fifth operating devices are substantially in radial alignment disposed on one side of the line, and the second and fourth operating devices are substantially in radial alignment disposed by a substantially equal amount on the other side of the line.

44. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein axially adjacent operating devices are axially spaced by an amount from 30 to 40mm.

45. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein each operating device may be activated independently.

46. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein each operating device preferably comprises an operating member connected to a vibration member, the operating member being connected to a source of ultrasonic energy.

47. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 46, wherein the operating devices have an inner passage through which fluid flowing through the apparatus passes.

48. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 47, wherein an inner surface of the inner passage is arranged to vibrate radially.

49. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 47, wherein the longitudinal axis of the inner passage of each operating device is substantially coincident with the longitudinal axis of the elongate passage.

50. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 36, which further comprises means for constraining flow of fluid towards the longitudinal axis of the elongate passage.

51. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 50, wherein said means for constraining flow of fluid comprises a funnelling device.

52. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 51, wherein said funnelling device is operative to reduce the cross-sectional area through which fluid flows by at least a factor of 4.

53. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 52, wherein said funnelling device is operative to reduce the cross-sectional area through which fluid flows by at least a factor of 8.

54. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 51, wherein the funnelling device is located within the elongate passage upstream of the operating devices.

55. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein each operating device comprises a vibration member having an inner passage.

56. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 36, wherein each operating device comprises an extender element for projecting an operating member into said elongate passage, said apparatus further comprising flushing means for flushing detritus from said extender elements.

57. (Currently Amended) Fluid processing apparatus for use in an elongate passage, the apparatus comprising an operating device for applying ultrasonic energy to fluid within the passage, said operating device comprising an extender element for projecting an operating member into said elongate passage, said apparatus further comprising flushing means for directing cleaning media at said extender element for flushing detritus from ~~said~~ the extender element back into the fluid flow within the passage.

58. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 57, wherein said flushing means comprises one or more nozzles provided at or adjacent said extender element.

59. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 58, wherein the one or more nozzles are housed in a wall of a chamber through which the extender element projects.

60. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 56, wherein the apparatus further comprises a plurality of operating devices arranged with their operating members

along a common longitudinal axis, adjacent extender elements being angularly offset with respect to one another.

61. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 60, wherein the plurality of operating devices are arranged in a "V" formation.

62. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 58, wherein the nozzles incorporate actuated valves.

63. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 57, wherein supply of fluid to the nozzles is controlled automatically, in response to a draw in power from the operating devices.

64. (Currently Amended) Fluid processing apparatus for use in an elongate passage, the apparatus comprising an operating device for applying ultrasonic energy to fluid within the passage, said apparatus further comprising flushing means for flushing detritus from said apparatus, said flushing means comprising a flushing nozzle for directing flushing media towards an outer surface of a substantially conical surface ~~provided within the passage~~ formed by an outer surface of a funnelling device provided in the passage.

65. (Canceled)

66. (Previously Presented) A method of treating fluids comprising placing a fluid processing apparatus into an elongate passage, and passing the fluid through the elongate passage;

wherein said fluid processing apparatus includes a plurality of operating devices for applying ultrasonic energy to fluid within the passage provided at different axial positions along the elongate passage, axially adjacent operating devices being radially non-parallel and radially non-opposing.

67. (Original) A method according to claim 66 wherein the fluid is sewage sludge.

68. (Original) A method according to claim 66 herein the elongate passage is aligned substantially vertically.